

## A Celebration of Life Mollie Lowery at Henry Fonda Theater

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On Tuesday, August 16th, a gathering was held at the Henry Fonda Theater to honor Mollie Lowery, a long time Los Angeles advocate for individuals experiencing homelessness, mental illness and addiction. Ms. Lowery impacted many people throughout the arc of her life from the years she spent as a nun in Philadelphia to her steadfast dedication to bettering the plight of those who are disenfranchised in Los Angeles.

In 1974, Ms. Lowery worked at Ocean Park Community Center and was instrumental in opening their domestic violence shelter called Sojourn. In 1985, she co-founded Los Angeles Men's Place (LAMP) on Skid Row which provided a drop-in center and services to individuals who were homeless with symptoms of mental illness. Ms. Lowery was a passionate proponent of the "Housing First" model and often provided training for DMH staff, including presentations at the annual Housing Institute. When Ms. Lowery left LAMP, she semi-retired to focus on her love of the Sierras, purchasing a ranch in the foothills of the eastern Sierra Nevada which she used as a respite for those whose experience was limited to urban life. Her drive to continue the fight to end homelessness brought her back to Los Angeles, joining Housing Works, a homeless

services organization, where she was back on the streets working directly with clients while also serving as director of programs, and ultimately Executive Director from 2006 to 2015.



At the celebration, over 20 persons offered testimony to Ms. Lowery's dedication and passion for helping those in need, among them Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, who stated that Molly passed the "head/heart/gut test," certifying her commitment to making a difference in the fight to end homelessness. Steve Lopez, Los Angeles Times columnist, likened her to a "field general on a battlefield," noting that "her impact on this city is incalculable." Molly Rysman, Housing and Homelessness Deputy for Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, said Lowery "increased agency of those that are homeless one person at a time." Numerous other speakers--including consumers, agency directors, family and friends, supplied anecdotes illustrating her ability to connect with others in a way that recognized the uniqueness of each individual.

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The event also celebrated her life through selections of poetry and song, all of which underscored one of Mollie's most-often repeated phrases emphasizing her approach to doing her work: "Do whatever it takes, for as long as it takes!"